

**Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER COMPLAINT**

Name of Center: Little Rascals Preschool & Daycare		Enrollment: 130	License ID: 4131000030
Street: 1125 Rockdale Rd	City: Dubuque	IA Zip Code: 52003	County: Dubuque
Mailing Address: 1125 Rockdale Rd			
Mailing City: Dubuque		IA Zip Code: 52003	
Director's Name: Jackie Thiltgen		Center Phone Number: 563-582-2400	
On-Site Supervisors: same		E-Mail Address: lr1125r@aol.com	

Date of Complaint: 8/8/2013

Date of Visit: 8/20/2013

☐ Scheduled ☒ Unannounced ☐ NA

☐ Non-Compliance with Regulations Found ☒ Compliance with Regulations Found ☐ NA

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

☒ **NO CHANGES to licensing status recommended**

☐ **PROVISIONAL license from** **to**

☐ **SUSPENSION of License**

☐ **REVOCATION of License**

Summary of Complaint:

A seven year old child described as active and needing a lot of redirection was duct taped to a chair after staff threatened to do so because the child would not sit in the chair and kept standing up. The center director told the parent about the situation. This happened a "couple of weeks ago". The director told the parent that the child got very upset, and staff let the child free.

Licensing Rules Relevant to the Complaint:

109.12(2) a-d Discipline does not allow - corporal punishment; punishment that causes humiliation, fear, pain or discomfort; locking children in an area or using mechanical restraints; associating with illness, toilet training, food or rest; or the use of verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about a child's family.

Inspection Findings:

An unannounced licensing visit was completed at this center on 8/20/13. The above concerns were discussed with the center owner/director, Jackie Thiltgen, at that time. Several other staff were interviewed by telephone at later dates.

Jackie stated she was familiar with the reported situation, however, she described it differently than reported. Jackie stated what actually occurred was that the school age children were fooling around with each other and duct taping themselves. She stated the school age program room frequently uses duct tape to make things as projects, such as duct tape wallets. She stated the center has various colors of duct tape for such projects. Jackie stated the situation was that some of the kids were duct taping each other and were having fun doing so. She stated the particular child in question was also duct taping others. Jackie stated the staff were present and witnessed what was going on and let this go on for a few minutes. Jackie stated she also saw what was going on, and she did tell the mother about it. Jackie stated the mother seemed fine with it at the time. Jackie stated the particular child had been at the center since infancy and did have behavioral concerns. Jackie stated she felt that the center really did try to work with the child. She stated the child was known to do things such as run out the door of the center, however, Jackie denied that the child's behaviors had anything to do with the duct taping situation. Jackie stated the children will not be allowed to play with the duct tape

any longer. Jackie stated this incident happened some time in June.

Jackie named four different staff who worked with the school age program during the summer. Jackie stated the children have returned to school for the year already. It was noted that the school age children were not present at the time of the visit. Jackie stated two of the school age summer staff are no longer employed at the center as they were college students and have also returned to school.

On 8/29/13 the licensing consultant phoned Jackie to get more information on how to contact the individual staff members. At this time, Jackie provided the names and phone numbers of six different staff who would have been involved with the school age children during the summer. The licensing consultant was able to speak with three of the five staff. The two staff who are no longer at the center did not return numerous phone messages left for them.

Staff Serena stated the school agers would use duct tape for different projects. She described that they had an investigation unit that took place during the summer. She stated they played a game during this unit where they would use duct tape as part of a role play where the children would have to figure out whose handprint was on the paper. This apparently was some sort of detective sort of game. Serena stated they would pretend to put the duct tape around the children's hands, over the top, but not fully around. She denied that it was just one child that this was done to. She stated there was a different part of the activity where the duct tape was put loosely over the child to the chair, but the child could still stand up and walk with the chair. She stated this was for show to make it look like the child was tied up. She denied there was ever any malicious intent or that she was aware of. She stated this was a week long unit, and they played this game once or twice. She stated the children loved the game. When asked about the particular child, she stated she did not feel this child was a big problem and that the child had typical behaviors.

Staff Molly stated she worked off and on in the school age room over the summer. She stated they do have duct tape present as an art material. She stated she knew about the investigation game, however, she stated she was in the two year old room on the day it was played. She stated she helped in the school age room for a bit that day and did help with the fingerprinting portion of the game, but then she had to go to different rooms at the center to help out. She did not recall any time that the particular child would have been taped to a chair. She stated this was a child who would try to instigate people at times and that the child really did not know when to stop. She stated she knew there were a lot of times this child had to talk to Jackie because of the child's behaviors. Molly stated she has never threatened a child to tape to a chair and had never seen any other staff do so either. She stated the children really liked the game.

Staff Katie stated she works with the school age children. Katie denied remembering using duct tape for anything other than art projects. She stated a couple of times they would catch the kids putting the tape on their mouths, and staff would tell them not to do this. Katie stated they did have the investigation unit, however, she did not remember using duct tape to tape kids. She stated they did split off into groups, however, so it might have been the group with the other staff who were using the tape. Katie stated she knew of no time that the particular child or any child was threatened to or was taped to a chair. Katie stated she would know this was not right and would definitely speak up and tell Jackie.

Special Notes and Action Required:

Based on the information gathered, there are not specific licensing violations identified. There is not enough information to indicate that staff taped a child to a chair as a means of discipline. Discussion occurred with the director regarding the possibility that playing with tape in this manner is not appropriate for children under any circumstance, even if the intent was innocent and not malicious. The director agreed. She has already stated that the children will no longer play with duct tape. There are no further actions required from this report at this time.

Heidi Hungate, MSW
DHS Child Care Licensing Consultant

Consultant's Signature:

Date:

09/26/2013

